

on reshaping federal farm policy, conservation, and CSA specifically, will be an important part of the discussion. I hope my colleagues will consider cosponsoring this bill.

TRIBUTE TO COMMANDER JAMES
F. STADER

HON. DAVID L. HOBSON

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 24, 2001

Mr. HOBSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an outstanding Naval Officer, Commander James Stader, who has served with distinction and dedication for almost two years for the Secretary of the Navy, as the Congressional Liaison Officer for Civil Engineering, Appropriations Matters Office under the Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Financial Management and Comptroller). It is a privilege for me to recognize his many outstanding achievements and commend him for the superb service he has provided to the Department of the Navy, the Congress, and our great Nation as a whole.

During his tenure in the Appropriations Matters Office, which began in August of 1999, Commander Stader has provided members of the House Appropriations Committee, Subcommittee on Military Construction as well as our professional and personal staffs with timely and accurate support regarding Department of Navy plans, programs and budget decisions. His valuable contributions have enabled the Subcommittee on Military Construction and the Department of the Navy to strengthen their close working relationship and to ensure the most modern, well trained and well equipped naval forces attainable for the defense of our great nation.

Mr. Speaker, James Stader and his wife Clara have made many sacrifices during his career in the Navy. His distinguished service has exemplified honor, courage and commitment. As they depart the Appropriations Matters Office to embark on yet another great Navy adventure in the service of a grateful nation, I call upon my colleagues to wish them both every success and the traditional Navy send-off "fair winds and following seas."

HELP SCHOOLS HELP PUPILS

HON. GARY A. CONDIT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 24, 2001

Mr. CONDIT. Mr. Speaker, we hear a lot about the crises in education and the failure of our public schools. Recently, Mr. James Enochs, the Superintendent of Modesto's schools, addressed this issue at a district meeting. I think we can all benefit from the comments and opinions of those who are involved in the front lines of education. I submit Superintendent Enochs' comments for insertion into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

HELP SCHOOLS HELP PUPILS

(By James C. Enochs)

I have been asked to comment briefly on what the schools need. It seemed like an agreeable enough topic. But, as with much of the discussion about education, if the answer

is neat and simple, it is probably wrong and misleading.

I am not a great pep-talk speaker. I think it is more important that we all face up to some of the grim realities that confront us. I get a lot of unsolicited advice in my job. Much of it from my friends in business, or as they prefer to call it, the "real world." Our conversations invariably end with my reminding them that they have three distinct and important advantages over schools:

You get to screen your applicants. You can take them or reject them based on the qualifications or lack of qualification they bring to the opening. We can't do that. We are required to take everybody irrespective of their qualifications.

You can pay them to get them to do what you want. We can't do that.

And, of course, if they don't please you, you can fire them. We can't do that, either.

And thank goodness we can't. Because those are hardly solutions to the kind of issues we face. Which is why I have chosen to be very direct and begin by telling you that you probably can't help us very much with the things schools need most. We need—we desperately need: More stable families; fewer abused children; less dope, alcohol and violence in the lives of our students; fewer gangs in the schools and more parents; we need kids who are fed before they come to school; we need more parents with the sense to discipline their children and guts enough to turn off the television; we need young children whose parents have taken the time to read to them; we need fewer fathers—and recently mothers—who think the axis of the earth passes through the 50-yard line; adults, suffering from a prolonged adolescence, who mistakenly believe that Saturday's hero is more important than Monday through Friday's good citizen and scholar; and we need 400-500 fewer pregnant unwed girls every year.

That's what schools need most. And, of course, that is what society needs most. In effect, my problems are yours; I only have to deal with them before you. And they certainly don't yield to something as simple, and unthinking as just don't accept them, or "can" them if they don't shape up. And I do think that an understanding of that—an understanding that not all failure is institutional failure—is a necessary precondition for a genuine partnership between schools and business.

Modesto City Schools, with nearly 35,000 students, is among the 25 largest school districts in California. And one of every eight children in America lives in California. . . Our school enrollment is greater than that of the 24 smallest states combined. And the public needs to understand something about that school population. And if you understand California, you will understand Modesto City Schools.

There is no place on the face of the earth with a more diverse population. Two-thirds of the state's newcomers are foreign-born. In fact, 15 percent of California's population was born in another country; and in the public schools, more than 30 percent of the children are of parents born in a foreign country; and for one-third of the children in California, English is a foreign language.

In Modesto City Schools, we have nearly 7,000 students who speak more than 40 different languages. That's an increase of 157 percent in the past 10 years. While it is hard for some people to accept, Modesto and, as a result, Modesto City Schools has taken on the characteristics of most urban areas in California: A very low educational level of parents. Nearly 30 percent of the parents of MCS children did not graduate from high school; a high percentage of welfare recipient families: nearly 9,000 of our students.

Families constantly on the move: We measure mobility on the number of students who leave or enter school after the first school month: nearly 10,000 students a year. Only 30 percent of the students who start kindergarten with us are still enrolled—by the eighth grade.

And I have mentioned the high and increasing number of children who do not speak or read English as their primary language. Just to translate that into something more manageable, the raw material resulting from these trends and the social disintegration of the family, has turned a typical class of 10th graders into a statistical nightmare in the Golden State:

Eight students will be on public assistance;
Three students will have sexually transmitted diseases;

Four will speak no English—none;

Three will be teen parents;

Three will grow up in public housing;

Two will be victims of child abuse;

Three will be regular drug users;

Three of them will have been born out of wedlock;

And half of them will have experienced at least one divorce in their family.

Now, if you look at that list, it must occur to even the greatest critic of public schools that educators didn't do it—we didn't introduce them to drugs, or break up their families, or force them onto public assistance, or get them pregnant, or any of the other myriad problems they pack with them to school. So, it's no good to say, "That's your problem, Mr. Superintendent; I pay my taxes and that's enough." Well, today's social dynamite piling up in the nation's school is tomorrow's headache for all of us, including the business community.

Among other consequences, the link between the social ills that plague many young children and early school failure, later high school dropouts, and ultimately a functionally illiterate or marginally literate, unskilled work force is an inexorable progression.

And to paraphrase that oil filter commercial, we can deal with it now, or we can deal with it later. But we have a problem. It was captured very nicely about a year ago in a cover article in Time magazine with the rather sharp title, "A Nation of Finger Pointers."

The major premise of the article was that we are becoming a nation of passive crybabies. People who absolve themselves of any individual responsibility, sit on their duffs, and assume the status of victims as a result of someone else's incompetence or even malevolence.

I get it from both ends. Some teachers and administrators want to blame it on the absentee parents who are sending us all these undisciplined kids who do not value education and are loaded down with problems created by those parents. It's the ill-prepared raw material argument: "How can we teach kids like that?"

On the other end of the process, I get it from the business community who says much the same thing, but substitutes "educators" for "parents." Educators are sending us all these undisciplined kids who do not value work and are loaded down with problems created by the schools. It's the same ill-prepared raw material argument: "How can we hire kids like that?"

So, what we have here is a problem in which everyone is either a victim or a scapegoat. If we have a problem, don't join hands anymore, point fingers. What we don't have is that old-fashioned American interdependency, shared responsibility, mutual understanding, the common ground where people meet and solve problems. And that is what this is about today.